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VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS

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TEXAS

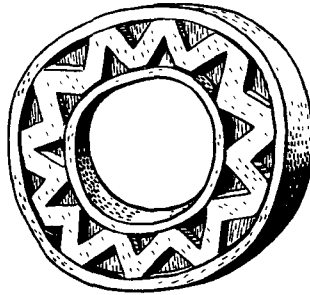
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PHILOSOPHY SERIES ONE


6th and 7th Degrees



DISCOVERING YOUR SOUL

Beloved Companion:

On the path of Philosophers we greet you, Beloved Companion, and we invite you to sit with us a while for a discussion of certain philosophic ideas concerning the Soul.

You will remember the Mayan symbol of Being  which represents Body, Mind, Spirit and Soul, as well as your higher developments, in their unity as well as in their dual or double aspects. Learn to use this symbol in your thinking; it is a most valuable tool, perhaps the first tool ever developed for use as an aid in philosophic thinking. Draw it many times while you meditate, label its parts, observe its unity as well as the interflow of energy between its sections. Do that as you read and absorb Mayan instructions, and you may find yourself creating a philosophy as well as discovering new thoughts and new understandings undreamed of by even the great philosophers before you.

As a guide to your meditations (and I hope you will read this lecture lesson very thoughtfully) take this tenet for example: "You do not have a Soul, you are One," Moo Lu Akin used to say to his Chela. That is a very important point to get settled, and it should be settled not as a vague possibility but as a definite reality. Let's think it over.

A successful dramatic teacher made it a practice to devote the first lesson to making her students understand this proposition: "You are not a body with a Soul in it, but a Soul that has a body in which to live and through which to express itself." It makes all the difference in the world.

"Know thyself", is an old Greek maxim that Socrates often repeated. This maxim was said to have been dropped by the gods from the sky. Many people never study and analyze themselves, and others do so carelessly. Anyone who watches his own actions, listens to his own speech and studies his own thoughts and feelings for a while is likely to be impressed with the fact that he has been something of a stranger to

himself. He will also discover something else - the fact that he is not just an animal, a machine, a physical organism, walking about and responding to a material world. Within himself he will find things being done by something much deeper and more significant. That something is his Soul.

A human being is a person, and personality is something spiritual and eternal. It is not just the outward appearance of a physical presence. It is something that glows in that presence and radiates from it, and yet something that is quite independent of it.

An analysis of anyone - you for instance - discloses some surprising things. Consider what it is that people think when they see you or hear your name. What is it?

A part of it is appearance - the clothes you wear and how you groom yourself. A part of it is possession - the amount of your money and the value of your property holdings. A part of it is family name and ancestry. A part of it is position. A part is friends and influence. A part is education and manners. A part is titles and distinctions.

When all this is cancelled out of the equation the remaining part is yourself, what you really are. It is a combination of Body and Soul - the irreducible you. The body is evident; it takes a little more observance and understanding to discover the Soul but if you doubt its reality look what happens to a body as soon as that something we call the Soul departs from it. We will consider that more fully later.

How do we know that such a thing as the Soul exists? Many voices tell us of it - reason, faith, prophecy, instinct and others - but let us disregard for the moment all the claims that skepticism can easily question, and turn to self-examination. There is no negative answer to personal experience. One knows beyond question what he sees and feels.

Now put yourself under the lens and note what you find. If one is going to know himself he must know all the phases of himself. If he knows only his physical appearance and condition he has not even started to get acquainted.

About the first objection the casual mind makes to the idea of the Soul is that one cannot see it. Some even go so far as to say they refuse to believe in anything they cannot see. This is a common bit of careless-mindedness. Far more of reality is invisible than visible.

Did you ever see your great great grandfather? Probably not. Then why do you assume that he ever existed? Did you ever see an electric current? No? Then if invisibility is proof of non-existence why are you so careful about taking hold of a charged wire? Did you ever see love, or friendship, or patriotism? No? Then is it not inconsistent to assume that they exist?

Only a small percentage of the facts even of the physical universe are visible to the human eye, or perceivable by any of the senses. As the keyboard of a piano includes only a small number of the vast range of possible tones, so the human ear is equipped to hear only a fraction of the sounds that may and probably do exist. The eye is likewise limited to a comparatively small range of the vast number of

ether wave lengths. Only those within that range stimulate it to the sense of sight. Most of the sounds and most of the light waves, like the ultra-violet and infra-red ones of which we know, do not register. We have no idea how much of the material universe is unsuspected by us because we have never seen it, and with our limited sense equipment we cannot do so.

Now let us do a little reasoning, starting with the thought of the body as a machine. That is what it is, a wonderful, complex, efficient machine. We all know that it is amazingly intricate and does wonderful things, but even the anatomist who spends his life in the study of it would admit that he has made scarcely more than a beginning.

Think of the digestive system by which the body assimilates food for growth and maintenance, separating from the intake exactly what it needs, and manufacturing and using the chemicals necessary to break it down and adapt it. Think of the circulatory system by which it carries the food supply through tiny capillaries to every point in the organism and takes away the waste as a return load. Think of that perfect pumping system, the heart, which forces the bloodstream out on this constant journey day and night all the years of one's life. Think of that delicate receiving instrument, the ear, with its outer drum and its little bone hammer pounding on an anvil to amplify vibrations taken in from the air and report them to the brain where they are translated into sound.

Think of that finest of all cameras, the eye, which takes up the various lengths of ether waves and reports them to the brain which calls each a color and translates the total effect into vision. Think of the brain, that central switchboard for the vast system of telephone communications called the nerves, through them receiving impulses from all over the body and sending back instructions to the proper muscles what to do about it. Think of the nerves themselves, built in circuits like telephone wires, inbearing and outbearing, to carry messages to and from the central office, the brain. Wonderful "machine", isn't it? Well, that is the merest beginning.

An automobile is built rudely along the same lines as is the human organism, as you will see if you think of the lights as eyes, the wiring system as nerves, the compression as the beating heart, the fuel equipment as the digestive system. Even the spark plugs are like the little fibers that keep the heart beating by shooting charges of electricity into its muscle at the right intervals.

Let us now take the next step in this reasoning process. We have the wonderful machine, and it is working. Did you ever see a machine at work unless someone somewhere was operating it? Wherever one sees a going mechanism the natural assumption is that someone has turned the power into it and is directing its operation. You may not see the operator but you know he is somewhere about and is functioning. Would it not be very foolish and unfair to apply this logic to every other machine and not apply it to the human body?

A machine is a living thing as long as the power is on and the operator is in charge, but it becomes a lifeless and motionless one the moment this ceases to be true. A telephone system is useless until the operator takes a seat at the switchboard. An engine is idle till a living personality lays a hand on the throttle. An automobile stands motionless at the curb till a living, thinking driver takes the wheel.

Now for the conclusion. It is clear that a machine operates only when it has

an operator. This applies to any machine, and therefore to the machine we call the Body. Who, then, is the operator in charge of the machine that is your body? It is the living Soul that is your true self.

Is it not time, then, to stop the habit of thinking of the body as being yourself, and begin thinking of yourself as one who has charge of this amazing machine, operates it, keeps trying to learn to operate it better, takes care of it, tries to keep it in good condition, and even takes it to the shop for any occasional overhauling or repairs needed? The more you think of it that way the better you will understand it, and the time will come when any other viewpoint would seem very strange. They are most unwise who go through life paying little or no attention to such an important matter. They miss the satisfaction of knowing their own natures, and they never know quite how to get the best results from the use and management of the machine that has been given them as a means to making the most of life.

Let us get the idea very clear that, even though they work in harmonious co-operation for years, the machine and its operator - you - are not the same and are not to be confused with each other. They are as separate and distinct in their identity as two things can be. The machine is made for the operator and has many special adaptations to his needs; but it is not he, nor are they inseparable. Any machine grows old and breaks down, and the time inevitably comes when it will not work any more. It may break down completely all at once, it may give way gradually, or it may meet with violent destruction. Any one of these bring it to the condition in which the parts will no longer interact.

People who have not thought these things through are in the habit of saying that when a body machine breaks down and refuses to work the person has died. That is no more the case than when any piece of mechanical equipment gets into such a condition that the operator can no longer use it. What it means is that this person's machine has failed him, and he has gone to get a new and better model. Having practiced for years with the old one, he is the better prepared to handle one that operates among these higher vibrations which lie outside the range of the human senses, so we do not see it from this limited realm in which we live. It might be said that he has finished his preliminary training and is now allowed to work with something more real and permanent. Is not that the reasonable view?

Suppose we think of the matter in terms of an automobile. The human body performs many other functions, but it is also a means of locomotion as is a car.

Mr. Jones doesn't go out of existence just because his car gets old, but he becomes the possessor of a new one. The old car goes to the junk yard and doesn't run any more, but that isn't what has happened to Mr. Jones. He is out on the sunny road somewhere with his hand on the wheel of a car with all the new refinements. Do you not see that the Soul and its survival is a very real affair, and that one may think of them in a very practical way? It is as independent of the body as the driver is of his car, or the engineer of his engine.

There are also other comparisons by which this may be made clear. Though the analogy is less complete, let us notice two of them.

Have you ever had a friend who lived in a plain little house on a side street where you often visited and had many pleasant hours? Have you returned to the old town after years of absence, and gone down to the old address, and found that your

friend didn't live there any more, and that even the house was gone? If so, you did just what anyone else would do. You went uptown, sought out a mutual acquaintance who had not disappeared, and asked what had become of your friend. This person told you how the old house had grown weatherbeaten and tumbledown, and how its occupant had finally found that he could no longer live in it satisfactorily, so he had bettered himself. He had moved into a new and finer house.

You drove out to the new address. There stood a beautiful house, surrounded by grassy lawns, rare flowers, green vines and stately trees. You rang the doorbell and in a moment there stood your friend, looking healthier, more prosperous, better dressed and less hard-driven than in the old days but otherwise the same. You sat down together and recalled the past, and chatted, and laughed, finding that he was indeed the same, though now you saw him in a new setting.

The body is like that, just a house we live in; only when a house of clay disintegrates and falls down, people weep and say their friend is dead, and even assume that he no longer exists and that they will never see him again. We take a sensible attitude when we find that some acquaintance has moved out of a house. If we find a tenant gone we simply assume that he has moved into another and perhaps better place. Why not make the same assumption when someone moves out of the body, for it and its occupant are no more to be confused than are a house and its tenant.

Let us put the next comparison into the form of a parable. A man had a very good suit of clothes, but like all suits of clothes it began to grow threadbare and shabby. Rips and rents appeared till it was no longer presentable in company and one day he discovered that it was no longer fit to wear. He went to the clothier's and bought a new suit, even better than the old one had been, and put it on and wore it.

A friend came to call on him, and did not find him in at the moment. Knowing him very well, the friend opened the clothes closet, saw the empty suit hanging there and immediately began spreading the word that his friend was dead.

"How do you know that?" people asked him.

"Don't you see him there?" he cried, pointing to the empty suit of clothes.

Foolish? Yes, but no more so than to leap to the same conclusion when we see a discarded body of clay, which is really nothing but a cast-off suit of clothes discarded by someone because it was no longer fit to wear. Why not assume that he also has been to the clothier's and obtained a new and better suit? The body and the person to whom it belongs are no more the same than are a suit of clothes and its wearer.

St. Paul had a comparison of his own. He spoke of life as a treasure we have in earthen vessels. A vessel may break or disintegrate, or be sold or given away. That has nothing to do with the treasure, which is simply transferred to another vessel.

Now, let us drop the thought of comparisons and analogies and think for a little while about some very plain, simple facts and their meanings. Every school-child knows that the tissue cells composing the body are constantly breaking down and being replaced by new ones, built of the food material that has been carried where

needed in the bloodstream. This process of breakdown and replacement goes on all the time, day and night, year in and year out. Naturally there would be a period of time in which the whole body would disappear and be replaced by a new one. Science says this happens about every seven years.

This means that once in every seven years the body dies and is replaced by a new one, that physically we undergo a complete death and resurrection into a new body about that often and that some of the bodies any mature person has lived in have been dead and gone for a long time. He no longer knows or cares anything about where they are or what has happened to them because like a severed hair or a cut nail they are not a part of him any more.

But personally and consciously he is still the same. He remembers things that happened long ago when he was living in an entirely different body, remembers them better perhaps than things that happened yesterday. He is not in the same body but he is the same person. His real self carried over unchanged while his body changed, broke down, and was replaced. These deaths and resurrections have not hurt him in the least. They have taken place so naturally and painlessly that he may not even have known what was happening.

A very simple and conclusive test of this can be made. Take a photograph of yourself that was made seven years ago or more, and hold it beside you before the mirror. Are they pictures of the same face and form that you see? If you have a series of photographs taken about every seven years, spread them out in order before you. Are they pictures of the same body? Yet you who have lived in this succession of bodies remain the same; memory tells you so.

Of course it may be said that the final breakdown of the body is a little different. There comes a time when the old organism is not replaced by a new one. Two things may be said in reply.

The first is that in our loose use of the word "life" we may mean any one of three things - the vitality that makes tissue cells grow and reproduce, or the co-operative functioning of the tissues and organs in a living body, or the soul life or spiritual selfhood without which the other two would not constitute a living personality.

The late Dr. Alexis Carrell kept a piece of the heart of a chicken alive for many years after its owner had ceased to exist as a cooperative organism. This bit of tissue lived, and grew, and had to be cut away frequently to keep it from filling the place. There was cell life, but neither organized life nor personal life. This will indicate the three senses in which the word is used. The first two cease to function and pass away, but we know by our survival of our own body changes that they have no necessary connection with the third, which can survive them or associate itself with new ones.

The second answer is from the teaching of the Apostle Paul who said there is a temporal body and there is also a spiritual body, one being earthy and the other being heavenly in nature and substance. When the complete cycle of physical change has been run and the body renews itself no more, the time has come to move into a different kind of tenement. There is no reason to believe the new spiritual body is any less real than the old clay one. The difference is that its finer substance is outside the range of human sensation, so that our eyes do not see it or our hands

feel anything when they touch it. That is not because of its limitations but because of ours.

Every person should set aside time as regularly as possible for silent meditation, alone, with others, or both. Every person should also be on the alert for manifestations that may come to him from the rest of the universe.

As you have done that, you may at times have been conscious of something speaking. You did not hear the voice so much as you sensed it. Or either in the dark or daylight, with eyes open or closed, you may have seen pictures come and go before you. At times these experiences may have proved to have quite definite significance for you.

These are not uncommon human experiences. Your Instructor recently questioned a class of schoolboys and found that twenty-three out of twenty-five had such experiences more or less frequently, and certainly there is nothing abnormal about a random group of teen-age boys. More or less open vision should be the universal experience of the race, and it would be if it were not for the tragedy of which Wordsworth speaks in his Ode on Intimations of Immortality. He says that though "all about us in our infancy doth heaven with all its wonders lie", yet "shades of the prison house begin to close upon the growing boy."

If you have these experiences it is not because you are queer but because your Soul is trying to talk to you, seeking by sight, sound, or symbol to get a thought, a fact, a warning, an instruction, or an inspiration across to your brain. It may be having a struggle because even the marvelous human brain is so much cruder than the Soul that it is difficult to make it understand.

It is not necessary to say much about these happenings unless they are of a nature to require it. They are for your personal benefit as a rule, and most others would not understand if you told them. Seek from them what they have for you. Learn to interpret them rightly and try to heed them. They are the kind of experiences we read about in the Bible. You have them because your Soul stands ready to instruct you and serve the best interest of your complete life. Receive its efforts in humble and grateful reverence but never again question the existence of your Soul when you have felt it stirring within you, seen its signals to you and heard it trying to speak to you in some language you would understand.

The Soul of each of us may look out on worlds our eyes cannot see, and may understand truth and possess knowledge our physical selves are incapable of receiving. Because of its lack of facilities for expression we remain unconscious of much of its knowledge, or only get occasional flashes of its thought. They are enough, however, to indicate once and for all that it is there and at work.

This brings up another point that should be mentioned in passing. Never say of anyone that he is a weak soul, a distorted soul, or a crude soul. It is the body that weakens and distorts and expresses crudely the manifestations of the Soul. Some are simply less fortunate in their physical inheritance than others but that is no indication that anything is lacking in the Soul. It simply does not have a very good instrument to use. Whatever his skill, the musician can only do as well as his instrument is adequate. The performance of even a Bach would be limited if he had only a folding reed organ on which to play.

Surely you have now discovered your Soul, if you had not done so before. Having discovered it, let your real self take command. Let it work through your body and rule your life in wisdom and power. As Moo Lu Akin once said, "Life is not the body; it just uses the body."

Meditate upon this and give these thoughts to others. Do not expect others to grasp them immediately; give them a little at a time. You will enjoy watching their expressions as they struggle with these ideas. Allow them a few days to digest the thoughts you gave them; then give them more. After a while they will begin to seek you out if they are good material. The seeds you sow will begin to sprout.

Then, if you are a wise cultivator, you will tend these lovely growing Souls and help them to grow further. Soon, your Garden of Souls will be a beautiful sight to see and your life will be enriched by the admiring, loving Souls about you.

There will come a day when the harvest will be ready, the fruit of your garden ripe. Then you can invite them into Mayanry as Companions of your Companions, and in time they may even attain the position in Mayanry which you now occupy.

This is all according to the Law of Life, for with each rebirth into Higher Degrees new Souls must fill the gap and occupy the earlier Degrees. Nature allows no vacuum.

Slowly then, in time, as the fruits of your garden ripen, you surround yourself with your own particular group of Mayan Companions who look to you as their guide, their Philosopher, their Beloved Companion.

The Mayan Way is a path of ever-growing interests, of rich rewards, and of abundant blessings.

We ask The Great Spirit's Blessings upon thee, Beloved Companion on this Path.

The Mayans